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Eyes of Light: Colour in the Lindisfarne Gospels

HEATHER PULLIAM

The brilliant and varied colours of the Lindisfarne Gospels are one of the manuscript's most celebrated features, and yet the question of their meaning and role within the iconographic programme has been largely neglected in existing scholarship. In part this is due to the fact that colour studies are an intensely problematic field of inquiry, necessitating an interdisciplinary approach that is also inherently dependent upon scientific analysis. Advances in Raman microscopy have enabled non-invasive testing for the first time, and in the past ten years the Lindisfarne Gospels and a number of other Insular manuscripts have undergone testing at the British Library and Trinity College Dublin. This essay offers a preliminary examination of the relationship between colour, iconography and meaning within the Lindisfarne Gospels, before proceeding to an in-depth analysis of the portrayal of eye colour within the manuscript. This analysis explores the connections between colour, material, early medieval epistemology, optics and exegesis.

DESPITE the many publications that discuss the Lindisfarne Gospels, relatively little consideration has been given to the relationship between colour and meaning within the manuscript. This lacuna in the literature is particularly notable given that its colour is one of the manuscript's most frequently lauded features. Typical of facsimile commentary volumes, both the 1956 and 2003 commentaries discuss colour within the context of pigment analysis, stylistic comparisons and verbal descriptions of the images.¹ Investigations into the iconographic meaning of its images, however, largely treat the pages as if they were without colour.² This omission is relatively common within the field of early medieval art history due to a host of issues that are too numerous to list here in their entirety.³ Colours transform over time; perceptions of colour vary depending on the viewer and lighting conditions; conservation issues frequently prevent access to the original; colour reproductions are unreliable and frequently unavailable — the list is a long one. Moreover, linguistic studies of colour vocabulary and literature provide an additional layer of uncertainty.⁴

It seems unlikely, however, that the colour of the Lindisfarne Gospels was applied casually or without thought. Recent colour reports suggest that the remarkable range of colours present within the manuscript was created via the sophisticated and careful application of very few original pigments.⁵ Unlike the later middle ages, when the roles of colourist, draughtsman and designer were usually distinct, it has frequently been argued that a single individual, the bishop Eadfrith, was responsible for all aspects of the Lindisfarne illuminations. In other words, the well-educated, literate artist who designed and executed the manuscript's complex iconography with its multivalent meaning also selected and applied its remarkable range of colours.

Modern audiences should be reminded that technologies have struggled to replicate the subtle and sophisticated colour range found in the Lindisfarne Gospels. The tunic worn by the evangelist Matthew on fol. 25v, for example, is a purple-plum colour in facsimile images, but appears red in the British Library 'Turning the Pages' online exhibition and a number of other publications (Fig. 1 and Col. Pl. IV in print edn).⁶ Equally, the outer garment worn by John on fol. 209v is a blue-violet colour in both facsimiles, but red on the British Library website and most other publications (Fig. 4 and Col. Pl. VII in print edn). This garment seems particularly difficult to reproduce, and even the new high-resolution images that were placed online during the course of writing this article fail in this respect. Additionally, while colour studies have repeatedly demonstrated that medieval descriptions and use of colour indicate that brightness, saturation and texture were often prioritized over hue, modern reproductions have not managed to capture the striking variations in intensity and texture present within the manuscript. Of the various reproductions available, the 2003 facsimile most closely matches the original.⁷

Refinements to Raman microscope technology in the 1990s have made it possible to identify a range of pigments with relative accuracy for the first time. Previously, analyses had depended almost exclusively upon visual identification and an understanding of chemistry and medieval recipes. As a number of recent publications have noted, observations based on this method have been insufficiently questioned.⁸ As Cheryl Porter has pointed out, the appearance of mineral pigments may change significantly due to oxidization, while organic pigments tend to fade over time; a single pigment can create a wide range of colour and even hue, depending on the binder, medium and amount of grinding; and medieval recipes are frequently vague, often mistranslated (or untranslatable) and at times even misleading. Fortunately, a few years ago, the pigments of the Lindisfarne Gospels were analysed using Raman microscopy. The 2004 report confirmed the need to question long-held assumptions based on visual inspections, reversing at least two popular assumptions about the manuscript's pigments.⁹

Much of this paper will focus upon the use of blue and green within the evangelist portraits. The published Raman microscopy analysis reports two types of green present within the manuscript. The bright leek-green colour of the outer rim of Mark's halo on fol. 93v and of the book held by Luke's evangelist symbol on fol. 137v both registered as verdigris, a copper-based pigment (Figs 3, 4 and Col. Pls VI, VII in print edn). The muddier, darker green of the bench frames in the Mark and Luke portraits registered as vergaut, a mixture of yellow orpiment and a woad-based pigment.¹⁰ The leek-green colour of the verdigris in the Lindisfarne Gospels is quite striking and its brightness relatively unusual. Surviving forms of green from the Insular period typically have a deeper, darker colour. One of the most surprising and important findings of the 2004 microscopy report was the absence of lazurite. The brilliant range of blues that are present within the manuscript had long been believed to have been composed of lapis lazuli, suggesting an extensive trade route, but the report discovered that they were organic rather than mineral. They have the chemical compound $C_{16}H_{10}N_2O_2$, and are most likely derived from the rather less exotic woad plant.¹¹

While analyses using Raman microscopy technologies are far more accurate than those based upon visual inspection, the results are not absolute. A number of pigments, especially organic plant-based ones, produce visible colour in concentrations that are too low for detection via this technology.¹² Of the mineral pigments, verdigris is particularly difficult to identify. Raman microscopy proved inconclusive, for

example, in a recent investigation of the use of green within the Book of Durrow, although the subsequent X-ray fluorescence analysis did detect copper.¹³ The identification of verdigris within the Lindisfarne Gospels, however, was further confirmed when green sweepings from the gutter on fol. 93v were analysed and identified as verdigris ($\text{Cu}_2(\text{O}_2\text{CCH}_3)_4 \cdot \text{Cu}(\text{OH})_2$).¹⁴ The bright leek-green found in the Lindisfarne Gospels also appears in a number of places within the manuscript, but only a few of these instances were tested. Prominent examples from the portrait pages include Matthew's pallium, the majority of books held by the various figures, the corners of the frames for Matthew and John's portraits, the rim of Mark's halo and, possibly, the eyes of the four evangelists (Figs 1–4 and Col. Pls IV–VII in print edn).¹⁵ While acknowledging the hazards of visual identification that are outlined above, it seems relatively safe to assume that these areas of leek-green are also verdigris or some similar copper-based pigment, especially when we consider that the artist who created the Gospels was working with a limited range of pigments. Additionally, this leek-green colour, most likely because of its copper content, tends to show through on the reverse side of the vellum in quite a distinct and recognizable fashion.

One of the most striking features of the Lindisfarne evangelist portraits is the brightly and varicoloured robes of the evangelists (Figs 1–4 and Col. Pls IV–VII in print edn). Scholars have frequently dissected, classified and analysed the theological meanings conveyed in the poses, attributes and even hairstyles of evangelists represented in Insular, Carolingian and late Anglo-Saxon manuscripts; however, as suggested above, the insightful discussions of the complex theological meaning inherent within these images never focus on and rarely even discuss the brilliant colours used in these portraits.¹⁶ Within the Lindisfarne Gospels, each portrait is surrounded by a relatively simple frame that surrounds a plain, pale pink background. With the exception of the Matthew portrait, the imagery is limited to the figure of the evangelist, a simple stool and footrest, writing materials and evangelist symbol. Against this stark regularity, individual differences of poses are marked and meaningful.¹⁷ Equally noticeable against the plain backgrounds of each portrait are both the vibrancy and distinct colour combinations that change from evangelist to evangelist.

At the most basic level, the manuscript's array of colour conveys variety and opulence; however, it might also be understood as a reference to the concord of the gospels, which was the subject of a number of patristic works, most notably Augustine's *Harmony of the Gospels*. As a number of scholars have demonstrated, this theme played a central role in Insular art, liturgy and literature, emphasizing that, while each gospel has a distinct voice, together they create a harmonious testimony to the life of Christ.¹⁸ Similarly, in the Lindisfarne Gospels, each of the evangelists has his own unique colour 'palette', but certain rhythms and patterns weave the four portraits together into a harmonious whole. John's clothing is the inverse of Matthew's but with some minor variations: his purple robe appears slightly bluer and the folds of his clothing are indicated via blue and white highlights, whereas Matthew's are delineated by black. Their haloes are similarly aligned. Matthew's nimbus is coloured with yellow but has a red rim; John's is red with a yellow rim. Mark and John sit on blue cushions; Matthew and Luke on red ones.

Significantly, one of the most influential early medieval discussions of colour symbolism, Bede's *Explanation of the Apocalypse*, emerged from the same cultural milieu as the Lindisfarne Gospels. In it, Bede explores at length the symbolism of the twelve stones of the walls of the Holy City (Revelation 21:19). The tunic colours of each of the four evangelists roughly parallel the colours of the first four stones: the first stone, jasper for Matthew; the second stone, sapphire for Mark; the third stone, chalcedony

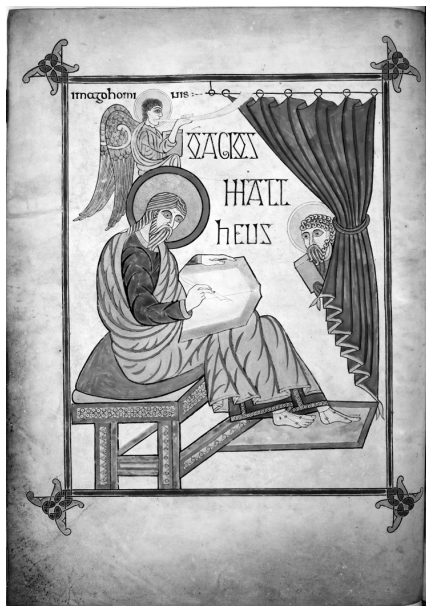


FIG. 1. Lindisfarne Gospels, British Library Cotton MS Nero D.IV, Matthew Portrait page, fol. 25v



FIG. 2. Lindisfarne Gospels British Library Cotton MS Nero D.IV, Mark Portrait page, fol. 93v



FIG. 3. Lindisfarne Gospels, British Library Cotton MS Nero D.IV, Luke Portrait page, fol. 137v



FIG. 4. Lindisfarne Gospels, British Library Cotton MS Nero D.IV, John Portrait page, fol. 209v

for Luke; and the fourth stone, emerald for John. While there is some question as to what colour jasper and chalcedony were thought to be, Bede and others undoubtedly perceived sapphires as blue and emeralds as green. Bede describes the former as the colour of sky on a clear day, and the latter as greener than the greenest foliage.¹⁹ His descriptions could easily be applied to the bright blue of Mark's tunic and intense green of John's garment. It is perhaps worth noting that chalcedony was frequently noted for its paleness, which is a distinctive feature of Luke's tunic.²⁰

John's association with the emerald is explicitly referenced in both the Lindisfarne Gospels and Bede's commentary on the Apocalypse. Within the manuscript, each of the gospels is demarcated by a carpet page surrounded by a rectangular frame with ornament at its four corners and at the four cardinal points (Fig. 5 and Col. Pl. VIII in print edn). As has frequently been noted, the decoration at the four cardinal points closely resembles examples of Anglo-Saxon metalwork. In the John carpet page, on fol. 210v, at the top and bottom of the frame, are two beast-heads. Unique to John's gospel, the interlace forms a faux metalwork socket that contains a single green stone (Figs 5–6 and Col. Pls VIII, IX in print edn). Again, it seems likely that these stones, along with the green in the four squares that compose the majority of the carpet page, are coloured with a copper-based pigment, as their colour closely matches the areas identified as verdigris and is clearly visible on the reverse of the page.

In his commentary on the stones of the Apocalypse, Bede notes, 'since such exalted faith is made known throughout the whole world through the gospel, and that there are four books of the gospel, the emerald is placed in fourth place'.²¹ A Greek source associates the emerald specifically with John, stating that the stone 'is green in colour and when rubbed with oil it receives a brilliant shine and beauty. We believe that this stone indicates the proclamation of the Evangelist John'.²² A number of Latin texts, including Bede's, associate the emerald with oil, and Irish commentaries similarly connected the evangelist John to oil.²³ In the later middle ages green robes become a fixed part of John's iconography, and the colour is typically interpreted as a sign of faith in this context.²⁴

The association between John and the colour green can be seen elsewhere in Insular and late Anglo-Saxon art. In the Cambridge-London Gospels, a green frame and four green crosses surround John's eagle.²⁵ Unfortunately, John's is the only extant symbol, and so it is not possible to compare it with the other evangelist symbols originally contained in this manuscript. Having said this, what survives of the Mark symbol appears to be executed in red and yellow, although the page was badly damaged by fire. The Echternach Gospels, which are so frequently compared to the Cambridge-London Gospels, offer little help in ascertaining the Cambridge-London colour scheme as they are executed entirely in yellow, red and purple.²⁶ The association between John and the colour green is more evident in manuscripts from the later Anglo-Saxon period. In New York, Pierpont Morgan Library, MS 709, for example, John appears on fols 1v and 77v, wearing a green robe. In a related manuscript also held at the Morgan Library, MS 708, John's portrait is framed in green and gold.²⁷

While John's eyes provide the most intense green stare, the other evangelists' eyes appear to be a pale bluish-green, as do those of the figure peering from behind the curtain in the Matthew portrait (Figs 7–10 and Col. Pls X–XIII in print edn).²⁸ One simple, pragmatic explanation might be that the artist had a personal preference for light eyes. While less common than brown eyes, conceivably there would have been quite a few blue- and even green-eyed people in Northumbria! More surprising,



FIG. 5. Lindisfarne Gospels, British Library Cotton MS Nero D.IV, John carpet page, fol. 210v

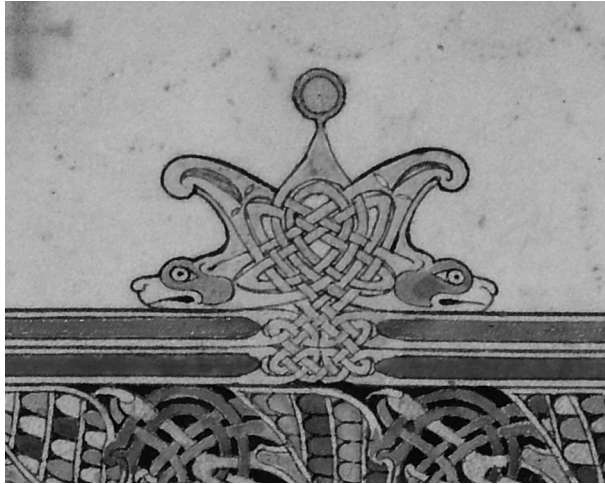


FIG. 6. Lindisfarne Gospels, British Library Cotton MS Nero D. IV, John carpet page, fol. 210v, detail

however, is the fact that the eyes of Matthew's angel and Luke's ox are similarly coloured (Figs 7, 10 and Col. Pls X, XIII in print edn). While the linguistic evidence shows an awareness of pale-eyed (glass-eyed) horses, it seems likely that as is the case today, this permutation would be fairly exceptional.²⁹ Perhaps even more odd is the fact that, although the lion symbol has black eyes, it appears to have blue-green 'shadows' around its eyes (Fig. 9 and Col. Pl. XII in print edn), a trait it shares with all four evangelists.

While much of Insular art is characterized by an abstract use of colour, the naturalistic colour found within the Lindisfarne Gospels' evangelist portraits is one of the manuscript's most distinctive features. Flesh-tones are carefully applied. The hair of both Mark and Luke is a subtle shade of dark ash-blond, while John's is a slightly richer chestnut brown. Matthew's hair is not simply grey, but 'salt-and-pepper' grey. The realism of the Lindisfarne portraits is most evident in the colouring of the evangelist symbols. The lion's pelt is not rendered in the usual bright yellow orpiment found in other Insular manuscripts, but rather a surprisingly subtle dun colour. This is the only instance of this colour within the manuscript,³⁰ suggesting the lengths to which the artist went in order to create suitable colour. Equally, the careful and intricate gradations of colour within the wings, fur, hooves and talons of the calf and eagle symbols are incredibly life-like. This realism is most readily apparent when contrasted to the bright reds, yellows and blues of the birds and beasts in other Insular gospel-books, and even within the carpet pages of the Lindisfarne Gospels. Clearly, great pains have been taken to achieve this remarkably naturalistic colour. In such a context, the depiction of a green-eyed ox and a lion wearing bright blue-green 'eye-shadow' is a significant deviation that merits consideration.

The unusual emphasis given to the eyes of the evangelists and their symbols, especially the unusual bluish-green 'shadow', is best understood through early medieval and patristic discussions of the eye, where it is repeatedly associated with light and the state of the soul. In Matthew 6:22 and Luke 11:33, Christ states that the 'eye is the light of the body'. In his oft-consulted *Etymologies*, Isidore of Seville writes:

Eyes are called *oculi* [...] because they have a hidden, *occultus*, light, that is one placed secretly, or within. These, among all the senses, are very close to the soul [*animae*]. In the eyes is every



FIG. 7. Lindisfarne Gospels, British Library Cotton MS Nero D.IV, John Portrait page, fol. 209v, detail



FIG. 8. Lindisfarne Gospels, British Library Cotton MS Nero D.IV, Matthew Portrait page, fol. 25v, detail



FIG. 9. Lindisfarne Gospels British Library Cotton MS Nero D.IV, Mark Portrait page, fol. 93v, detail



Fig. 10. Lindisfarne Gospels, British Library Cotton MS Nero D.IV, Luke Portrait page, fol. 137v, detail

disclosure of the mind [*mentis*], whence the disturbance or joy of the animus appears in the eyes. The eyes are also *lumina*. They are called this because light, *lumen*, emanates from them; or because in the beginning, they hold light closed within them; or having received it from outside, they pour it back, exposing it to sight.³¹

Isidore's description of the eye hints at several key features of vision as it was understood in the early medieval period.³² The mind focuses and wills rays of light from the eyes to the object, touching the object and bringing some aspect of it — its form or image — back into the viewer's body. In so doing, the viewer takes on some

characteristics of what s/he has seen, and the object is imprinted — medieval writers frequently use the metaphor of a wax and seal — onto the viewer. Augustine, and a number of other medieval writers, cite the example of the chameleon that looks at a certain hue and then transforms into that hue as well as to the mistaken belief that the visual ‘caprices’ of a pregnant mother alter the appearance and form of her unborn child.³³

In a similar vein, biblical passages repeatedly connect the eye with light, purity and God’s teachings. In the gospel passages mentioned above, Christ states, ‘If your eye is wholesome, your entire body will be filled with light. But if it is wicked, then even your body will be darkened’ (Matt. 6:22). In the psalms, which were such an integral part of monastic life, the narrator repeatedly calls for God to ‘enlighten my eyes’.³⁴ Elsewhere he asks God to ‘light my lamp’ and praises God for enlightening the blind.³⁵ When the faithful turn towards Christ and his teachings, they look upon the truth and the light and thus their eyes are filled with light. Most relevant to the evangelist portraits, Psalm 18 states that ‘the precepts of the Lord are brilliant, enlightening the eyes [*illuminans oculos*]’ while the popular Psalm 118 adds ‘your word is a lamp [*lucerne*] to my feet and a light [*lumen*] to my paths’. This theme is expanded by St Paul, who describes the wicked as the blind in whom ‘the light of the Gospel of the glory of Christ [*illuminatio Evangelii gloriae Christi*], who is the image of God’ does not shine. Conversely, the good carry in ‘earthen vessels, this treasure’, that is, the light that God ‘has shined [. . .] into our hearts, to illuminate the knowledge of the splendor of God, in the person of Christ Jesus’ (II Cor. 4:4, 6–7).

This theme is most explicitly set out in Augustine’s commentary on the opening of John. In his second treatise, commenting on John 1:8 (‘He was not the Light, but he was to offer testimony about the Light’), Augustine writes: ‘An enlightened man is as called a light; but the true light is that which enlightens’.³⁶ He goes on to note that eyes are called lights, but that they are open in vain unless they have some other source of illumination such as a lamp or the sun. In his first treatise, he explains at great length that the teachings of scriptures and men such as John the Baptist and John the Evangelist are like mountains that are illuminated by and thus reflect the light of God to smaller men.³⁷ He goes on to caution that, although shining, they are not the source of the light, citing John 1:9: ‘The true Light, which illuminates every man, was coming into this world’. He urges his audience to lift their eyes and bodily senses to the light of the evangelist and his gospel while raising their hearts to its source, the Lord.

As John Gage has noted, gospel books were associated with light, and their gold covers symbolically conveyed Christ’s claim, ‘I am the light of the world’.³⁸ In a number of early medieval images, gospel books are shown studded with emeralds, which are often four in number or arranged in clusters of four.³⁹ It seems likely that this custom similarly indicates that the gospels shine with the light of God, drawing upon the belief that the emerald was the brightest gemstone. This may explain the unusual choice of green for the covers of the majority of books that are portrayed within the Lindisfarne Gospels. Moreover, according to both Bede and Isidore, the emerald ‘imbues the reflected air around it with greenness’.⁴⁰ Similarly, the evangelists and their gospels enlighten those who heed their teachings. While not specifically referring to the evangelists, Bede writes that the emerald represents those who ‘strive the more to conceive in their mind by hope “the unfading and eternal inheritance which is reserved in heaven,” and extend it to their neighbours by preaching’.⁴¹

In the Lindisfarne Gospels, the artist's use of the colour articulates the union between the evangelist and the light of Christ to which the gospels give witness. Three of the four evangelists stare directly at their holy texts, absorbing the light of the word (Figs 1–4 and Col. Pls IV–VII in print edn). The lion with the blue-green 'eye-shadow' and green-eyed ox stare out towards the viewer, prominently holding their green books between their paws and hooves (Figs 9, 10 and Col. Pls XII, XIII in print edn). In Matthew's portrait page, his angel and the mysterious figure peering from behind the curtain also hold onto green books, the former staring outwards and the latter gazing intently at Matthew's gospel (Fig. 1 and Col. Pl. IV in print edn). In both cases, the figures' eye colour seems to reflect that of the green books which they carry. The evangelists and their symbols bear witness to the truth and light that is Christ, and some aspect of his glory is imprinted upon them. It is perhaps worth noting at this point that the only use of gold writing in the manuscript is on the incipit pages where the evangelists' names are written in gold so that they literally reflect light.⁴² As we have seen, according to late antique and early medieval theories of vision, the object is not only touched by the eye's rays but its form is 'absorbed into' the body. Although with significant differences, spiritual sight similarly allows the light of Christ to enter into the soul of the 'viewer' and facilitates a union between object and audience.⁴³

The specific use of blue and/or green to convey God's light is unsurprising. In Exodus 24:10 and Ezekiel 10:1–4, the glory of God is described as having the likeness of a sapphire. In his discussion of sapphires, Bede cites both passages, saying that 'the glory of the Lord consists of this colour, which bears the image of the super-celestial'.⁴⁴ Similarly, the emerald was associated with the radiance of the enthroned Christ due to the description in Revelation 4:3, 'And there was an rainbow [*iris*] surrounding the throne, in aspect similar to an emerald'. In mosaics, the triumphal *crux gemmata* is frequently studded exclusively with emeralds, sapphires and pearls.⁴⁵ In a number of Byzantine, Anglo-Saxon and Carolingian artworks, Christ is shown surrounded by a green mandorla or aura, and the haloes of both him and his saints are usually gold or green.⁴⁶ Similarly, Christ's halo was often shown studded with green emeralds.⁴⁷ Within the Lindisfarne Gospels, Mark and John, the two evangelists who were associated with the resurrected and glorified Christ, sit on blue cushions and wear blue and green tunics (Figs 7, 9 and Col. Pls X, XII in print edn).⁴⁸ As I have noted elsewhere, the Grandval Bible similarly distinguishes the two 'divine' evangelists from the two 'mortal' evangelists through material and colour, where the former have gold haloes and the latter have silver ones.⁴⁹

Moreover, the Lindisfarne Gospels are not unique in portraying Christ and his saints as having light-filled, or light-emitting, eyes. It has frequently been suggested that Insular figurative sculpture with drilled eyes would have had insets of some kind, presumably glass, as is the case elsewhere, and the National Museum of Scotland's recent discovery of a complete tin sleeve in the drilled socket that forms the eye of the Aberlady angel would seem to confirm this.⁵⁰ In the Durham Crucifixion page, despite its badly deteriorated colour, Christ's eyes — or specifically the disproportionately large irises of his eyes — are a notable green colour, as are those of the evangelist symbols in the Book of Durrow (Figs 11–13 and Col. Pls XIV–XVI in print edn).⁵¹ The latter should perhaps be discounted as the options for eye colour are somewhat restricted due to the manuscript's limited colour range. The Durham Crucifixion page, however, makes use of a number of colours including green, black, orange, yellow,



FIG. 11. Book of Durrow, Dublin, Trinity College Library, MS A. 4. 5. (57), fol. 21v

and brown, and the practice of leaving the eye without colour and simply delineating the pupil in black or brown was certainly an option as it was a relatively common convention in this period. In another example from Rome, the four evangelist symbols in the 7th-century Oratory of San Venanzio in the Lateran, rather disconcertingly, have bright red eyes.⁵² In metalwork, on the lower cover of the Lindau Gospels, four champlévé busts emerge from the central square of the boss.⁵³ Although all four of the figures are identified by the Morgan Library as representing Christ, it seems more



FIG. 12. Book of Durrow, Dublin, Trinity College Library, MS A. 4. 5. (57), fol. 84v



FIG. 13. Durham Cathedral Library A. II.17, Crucifixion page, fol. 38v

likely, given Insular practice, that these busts are multivalent, portraying the four evangelists as embodying the various aspects of Christ. The eyes of the figures are outlined in blue while the irises, not unlike the Lateran mosaic, are an iridescent orange colour. In these latter two examples, what is remarkable is not the presence of colour within the eye, but its otherworldly and unnatural hue.

While acknowledging the limited colour range of the Book of Durrow, the representation of Matthew's symbol suggests that the green eyes of the evangelist symbols might not be mere coincidence (Fig. 11 and Col. Pl. XIV in print edn). Wearing a brilliant cloak, the figure stares directly out at the spectator with bright green eyes and wears a matching green 'X' or 'Chi' over his chest. In Psalm 4:7, the narrator asserts that 'the light of your countenance, Lord, has been sealed upon us'. Both Augustine and Cassiodorus in their commentaries on this verse make the analogy to a coin that is stamped with the emperor's image. Cassiodorus writes that the 'cross leaves its mark, the light is of God's countenance' shining within the good Christian. Augustine notes that, when the Christian soul carries the light of God's countenance, it is stamped within, in 'his very heart, that is, in that chamber where we are to pray'.⁵⁴ The evangelist symbol of Matthew literally bears the imprint of Christ's cross of light in his heart.⁵⁵

While it has been suggested that the areas of green and/or blue-green that surround the eyes of the human figures should be explained as a rather singular reflection of Byzantine modelling,⁵⁶ it is better understood as a reference to the light of the church and her teachings shining out from the eyes of the evangelists, which — like the emerald — imbues the air reflected around it with light and colour. In the Crucifixion page of the Durham Gospels, Christ's bright green eyes are given similar emphasis (Fig. 13 and Col. Pl. XVI in print edn). Almost invisible in reproductions of this badly damaged page, Christ's eyes are surrounded by minute, dense, parallel, vertical striations. The manner in which the lines are arranged at the sides of the eyes clearly indicates that they are not intended to represent eyelashes and so may similarly reflect the radiance of Christ's eyes. Even in its current condition, with the majority of its colour stripped from it, the page with its undulating aura surrounding the head and shoulders of Christ and his rippling garment suggest brilliant light emitting from him.

The Lindisfarne Gospels' selection of blue and/or green for the iris and surrounding eye area of the evangelists and their symbols makes a great deal of sense. Gregory the Great writes, 'He strengthens the minds of His preachers in the love of internal greenness, so that they despise all transitory things [...] Hence the shepherd of the Church himself, calling his hearers to pastures of eternal greenness'.⁵⁷ Similarly, in his commentary on the Apocalypse, after Bede compares the sapphire to the light of the skies on a clear day, he goes on to say that the holy man, 'When struck by the rays of the sun, emits a radiant brightness from himself; because the mind [*animus*] of the saints, which is always intent on heavenly things, in that it is daily renewed by the rays of divine light [...] diligently seeks for the things eternal, and commends them to others for their seeking'.⁵⁸ Earlier in the commentary, when discussing the emerald rainbow, Bede writes that it represents the saints whom God has enlightened, noting that it is therefore appropriate that they are compared with 'an emerald, a stone of a deep green'.⁵⁹

Most relevant to the faux emeralds that appear in the John carpet page, both emeralds and the colour green were celebrated for their ability to heal and refresh strained eyes. Pliny, in a work that may well have been known by Bede, writes that

the emerald is of such a beautiful green that strained eyes can be restored by merely gazing upon it.⁶⁰ Isidore similarly praises the emerald's ability to soothe eyestrain.⁶¹ In this context, it is unsurprising that John, the evangelist associated with clear vision and whose gospel was thought to heal the sick, wears a bright green tunic, while the John carpet page is studded with faux emeralds. Perhaps coincidentally, Augustine's commentary on John repeatedly describes Christ's incarnation as an eye-salve (*collyrium*).⁶²

In terms of pose, as Michelle Brown has pointed out, the most notable distinction occurs in the John portrait where the Evangelist's singular frontal pose and direct gaze demarcate him as the beloved apostle who wrote the Book of Revelation.⁶³ As such, John was seen as one gifted with special vision. This conceit is a standard motif in Insular and early medieval exegetical literature and art, where John's symbol, the eagle, is described in terms of the creature's ability to see long distances and its habit of staring directly at the sun.⁶⁴ Augustine's homily on John 1:1, which is clearly referenced in the John Portrait within the Book of Kells, famously expounded at length upon John's sight and the nature of 'inner' or 'spiritual' vision.⁶⁵ In the Lindisfarne Gospels, John's frontal gaze is rendered in a fully saturated, clear green that matches his tunic and the book held by his symbol. Only this green colour and the bright red of John's halo are clearly perceptible on the reverse of the page. While it is impossible to know whether this effect was immediate, the resulting ghostly image with its large green eyes that seem to burn through the page is quite disconcerting.

Unlike the other three evangelists in the Lindisfarne Gospels, John does not look down at his text but instead seems to stare directly out at the viewer, which Brown interprets as John inviting 'the onlooker to partake in the inspiration of the gospel' (Fig. 4 and Col. Pl. VII in print edn).⁶⁶ As I have discussed elsewhere, Insular art often depicts saints, scribes and evangelists with a lowered gaze, looking at some intermediary object that affords them an indirect, inner vision or glimpse of the Godhead.⁶⁷ In the two surviving evangelist portraits from the Book of Kells, Matthew and John stare directly out at the manuscript's audience. In both cases, the complex iconography makes clear that what the viewer sees in the image is only a glimpse of the inner vision beheld by the evangelist. The iconography of the John portrait and its incipit on the opposite verso do this through extremely complex visual exegesis that draws directly from Augustine's commentary on John 1:1.⁶⁸ More simply, and similar to John's gesture in the Lindisfarne Gospels, Matthew obscures his right hand under his outer garment to touch his breast, a gesture that George Henderson has interpreted as possibly indicating 'the hidden counsels of God, not yet revealed'.⁶⁹ While the hand of John in the Lindisfarne Gospels emerges from under his outer garment, it also rests on his chest. Both gestures surely denote that true understanding and vision of the scriptures are housed within the chest, which in the medieval period was seen as the 'secret', 'inner chamber', a treasure house in which true wisdom was kept.⁷⁰ John's bright green under-tunic, matching his eyes, suggests an inner light that burns brightly.

While John's gaze conveys an inner vision, it equally suggests a looking outwards. Unlike the other evangelists who regard their work, we cannot see the object of John's gaze. In part, this indicates John's longing and unfulfilled desire, characteristics that were thought to be essential aspects of spiritual vision. John's eyes reach out like an unanswered question, and we empathically follow his gaze in its search for an object. Again, parallels can be found in Augustine's commentary on the beginning of John's gospel, where the patristic writer explains to his audience that, while they should look

to the evangelist and his gospel with their bodily sight, their inner eye should follow John's gaze, seeking the source of his illumination.⁷¹ In another sense, however, John's eyes do find and engage with an object, and that object is us. Augustine, in his many analyses of spiritual vision, suggests that, while Christians cannot 'presently' look fully upon God, they can glimpse God in each other. Love is the key component of spiritual sight, and in loving a neighbour, according to Augustine, one is able to glimpse God.⁷² It seems unsurprising, then, that John, the evangelist who was so commonly associated with love,⁷³ stares directly at the manuscript's audience while reflecting the glory of God.

By way of conclusion, it is helpful to return to the distinctive varicoloured robes discussed at the beginning of this paper. Although described as 'illogical' and 'indiscriminate' shadows, it seems more likely that the bright red folds of John's tunic represent light.⁷⁴ Similar lines of red, green, white and blue appear on the robes of all four evangelists, and it has even been suggested that they may represent shot silk (Figs 1–4 and Col. Pls IV–VII in print edn).⁷⁵ Whether or not this is the case, surely the striations of bright green, blue and red indicate heavenly light and radiance rather than dark shadow. With the exception of blue, these are the colours used in the manuscript to portray the heavenly auras that surround the evangelists and their symbols. As we have seen, green and blue were colours associated with the brilliance of the heavens and divine light. Artists commonly used red to convey firelight, sunlight and the brilliance of gold.⁷⁶ Additionally, with the notable exception of Matthew's deep plum-coloured robe and its black striations,⁷⁷ the colours of the folds and the garments that they appear on come from opposite sides of the colour-wheel — red and blue; green and red — creating the optical effect of simultaneous contrast whereby colours intensify one another, giving the illusion of flux.⁷⁸ As a result, the four men appear to wear living robes of light, fulfilling the instructions that Christ gave during his Sermon on the Mount: 'You are the light of the world [...] Let your light stand before the eyes of men so they may see [...] and praise your father in heaven'.

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NOTES

1. *Evangeliorum Quattuor Codex Lindisfarnensis*, ed. T. D Kendrick, 2 vols (Olten and Lausanne 1956–60); Michelle Brown, *The Lindisfarne Gospels: Society, Spirituality and the Scribe* (London 2003). The scientific analyses published in the 2003 monograph have proved revolutionary to our understanding of colour.

Equally valuable, however, is Bruce-Mitford's 'Decoration and Miniatures', published in the 1956 commentary volume to *Evangeliorum Quattuor* (see above), in which he offers careful observations and detailed description of colour, even observing the lighting conditions under which he viewed the manuscript.

2. There are notable exceptions to this in Brown's work: see, for example, her discussion of purple (Brown, *Lindisfarne* (as n. 1), 335, 369).

3. For a more in-depth discussion of these issues and overview of published scholarship on medieval colour, see H. Pulliam, 'Color', *Medieval Art History Today — Critical Terms* (a special issue of) *Studies in Iconography*, 33 (2012), 3–14.

4. See, for example, N. Barley, 'Old English Colour Classification: Where Do Matters Stand?', *Anglo-Saxon England*, 3 (1974), 16; C. Biggam, *Blue in Old English: An Interdisciplinary Semantic Study*, Costerus 110 (Amsterdam 1997); *The Realms of Colour*, ed. A. Portmann and R. Ritsema (Leiden 1974), especially P. Dronke, 'Tradition and Innovation in Medieval Western Colour-Imagery', 51–107; J. André, *Étude sur les termes de couleur dans la langue Latine*, Études et commentaires 7 (Paris 1949); A. George, 'Calligraphy, Colour and Light in the Blue Qur'an', *Journal of Qur'anic Studies* 11 (2009), 75–125; H. A. Lazar-Meyen, 'Colour Terms in Táin Bó Cúailnge', in *Ulidia: Proceedings of the First International Conference on the Ulster Cycle of Tales, Belfast and Emain Macha, 8–12 April 1994*, ed. J. Mallory and G. Stockman (Belfast 1994), 201–05; L. James, *Light and Colour in Byzantine Art* (Oxford 1996). There has been some debate as to how applicable paradigms found in language are to visual images as well as to what extent language reveals a culture's conceptualization of colour.

5. Brown, *Lindisfarne* (as n. 1), 281.

6. For the BL online images, three websites are now available (the first requires a plug-in that can be downloaded from the webpage): <<http://www.bl.uk/onlinegallery/tftp/tftpbooks.html>>, <<http://www.bl.uk/onlinegallery/tftp/accessibletfp.html>> and <http://www.bl.uk/manuscripts/Viewer.aspx?ref=cotton_ms_nero_d_iv_f5001r>. For an example of the type of colour distortion common in most print reproductions of the manuscript's pages, see C. Nordenfalk, *Celtic and Anglo-Saxon Painting: Book Illumination in the British Isles, 600–800* (London 1977).

7. This conclusion is based upon my own comparison between the original manuscript and the facsimile.

8. K. L. Brown and R. J. H. Clark, 'The Lindisfarne Gospels and Two Other 8th Century Anglo-Saxon/Insular Manuscripts: Pigment Identification by Raman Microscopy', *Journal of Raman Spectroscopy*, 35 (2004), 4–12; C. Porter, 'You Can't Tell a Pigment by its Color', in *Making the Medieval Book: Techniques of Production: Proceedings of the Fourth Conference of the Seminar in the History of the Book to 1500, Oxford, July 1992*, ed. L. Brownrigg (Los Altos Hills, CA 1995), 111–16.

9. Brown and Clark, 'The Lindisfarne Gospels' (as n. 8).

10. The published colour reports use the term 'indigo' as a blanket term for the pigment produced from both indigo and woad plants, but woad is used here to distinguish between the two plants.

11. Brown and Clark, 'Lindisfarne Gospels' (as n. 8), 7.

12. *Ibid.*, 9.

13. Personal communication with Susie Bioletti, Trinity College Dublin. See also L. Burgio, S. Bioletti and B. Meehan, 'Non-destructive, In Situ Analysis of Three Early Medieval Manuscripts from Trinity College Library Dublin (Codex Usserianus Primus, Book of Durrow, Book of Armagh)', in *Making Histories: Proceedings of the Sixth Insular Art Conference*, ed. J. Hawkes (York forthcoming).

14. Brown and Clark, 'Lindisfarne Gospels' (as n. 8), 9.

15. Of these instances, the eyes are the most difficult to classify (see discussion below).

16. See, for example, J. J. G. Alexander, 'The Illumination of the Gospels', *The York Gospels: A Facsimile With Introductory Essays By Jonathan Alexander, Patrick McGurk, Simon Keynes & Bernard Barr*, ed. N. Barker, J. Alexander, P. McGurk, and C. Barker (London 1986), 65–74; J. O'Reilly, 'St John as a Figure of the Contemplative Life: Text and Image in the Art of the Anglo-Saxon Benedictine Reform', in *St Dunstan: His Life, Times and Cult*, ed. N. Ramsay and T. Tatton-Brown (Woodbridge 1992), 165–85; Michelle P. Brown, *The Book of Cerne: Prayer, Patronage, and Power in Ninth-Century England* (London 1996); J. Rosenthal and P. McGurk, 'Author, Symbol and Word: The Inspired Evangelists in Judith of Flanders's Anglo-Saxon Gospelbooks', in *Tributes to Jonathan J. G. Alexander: The Making and Meaning of Illuminated Medieval & Renaissance Manuscripts, Art & Architecture*, ed. S. L'Engle and G. B. Guest (London 2007), 185–202.

17. Brown, *Lindisfarne* (as n. 1), 346–70. Laura Kendrick's discussion of these four evangelist pages is also extremely enlightening but often overlooked: L. Kendrick, *Animating the Letter: The Figurative Embodiment of Writing from Late Antiquity to the Renaissance* (Columbus, OH 1999), 161–64.

18. R. McNally, 'The Evangelists in the Hiberno-Latin Tradition', in *Festschrift Bernhard Bischoff zu seinem 65. Geburtstag*, ed. J. Autenrieth und F. Brunhölzl (Stuttgart 1971), 111–22; J. O'Reilly, 'Patristic and Insular Traditions of the Evangelists: Exegesis and Iconography', in *Le Isole britanniche e Roma in età Romanobarbarica*, ed. A. Fadda and E. Ó Carragáin (Rome 1998), 49–94; "Traditio evangeliorum" and

"Sustentatio": The Relevance of Liturgical Ceremonies to the Book of Kells', in *The Book of Kells: Proceedings of a Conference at Trinity College Dublin, 6–9 September 1992*, ed. F. O'Mahony (Aldershot 1994), 398–436; J. Cronin, 'The Evangelist Symbols as Pictorial Exegesis', in *From the Isles of the North: Early Medieval Art in Ireland and Britain: Proceedings of the Third International Conference on Insular Art, Held in the Ulster Museum, Belfast, 7–11 April, 1994*, ed. C. Bourke (Belfast 1995), 111–17.

19. On sapphires, he cites Exodus 24:10, 'Under his feet was a paved work of sapphire stone, or like the sky, when it is serene', and on emeralds, he writes, 'Smaragdus nimiae viriditatis est, adeo ut herbas virentes, frondesque et gemmas superet omnes, inficiens circa se viriditate repercussum aerem, qui merito et viridi proficit oleo, quamvis natura imbuatur': *PL*, XCIII, cols 198b, d. For English translations of Bede's text, see <<http://www.apocalyptic-theories.com/theories/bede/bede.html>> (accessed 1 November 2012).

20. See for example *PL*, XCIII, col. 197d.

21. '[T]anta fidei sublimitas per Evangelium mundo innotuit, apte, propter quatuor Evangelii libros, quarto loco smaragdus ponitur': *PL*, XCIII, col. 199b.

22. W. Weinrich, *Revelation*, Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture 12 (Drovers Grove, IL 2005), 375.

23. See McNally, 'The Evangelists' (as n. 18) and *PL*, XCIII, col. 198c. I am grateful to George Henderson for pointing out that oil was associated both with the evangelist John and the emerald.

24. A. Petzold, "'Of the Significance of Colours": The Iconography of Colour in Romanesque and Early Gothic Book Illumination', in *Image and Belief: Studies in Celebration of the Eightieth Anniversary of the Index of Christian Art*, ed. Colum Hourihane (Princeton 1999), 130–31.

25. Cambridge, Corpus Christi College MS 197b, fol. 1r, and BL, MS Cotton Otho C V: see M. Brown, *Manuscripts from the Anglo-Saxon Age* (London 2007), pl. 31.

26. Paris, Bibliothèque nationale, MS Latin 9389 (images of this and the other Bibliothèque nationale manuscripts cited in this paper are available at: <<http://mandragore.bnf.fr/jsp/rechercheExpertise.jsp>> (accessed 1 November 2012)).

27. Images of these pages are available via the Pierpont Morgan's online resource, CORSAIR, at <<http://corsair.morganlibrary.org/>> (accessed 1 November 2012).

28. Because the eye area is quite small and less intensely coloured in these other examples, it is not possible to state with certainty whether the eyes are blue, green or a shade of blue-green. The 2004 colour report describes the eye area of Mark as 'possibly verdigris' and that of Luke as 'indigo'. It is not clear, however, whether the tested area was the 'shadowed' skin between the eye and the eyebrow or the iris itself. The version as published in Michelle Brown's monograph does not include the Luke test site but does indicate the test areas more specifically, making it clear that it is the skin surrounding Mark's eye that is coloured indigo (woad). Brown and Clark, 'The Lindisfarne Gospels' (as n. 8), 6–7, and Brown, *Lindisfarne* (as n. 1), 437–51. Additionally, the colour terms in both Old Irish and Anglo-Saxon show considerable slippage between these two hues, see Biggam, *Blue in Old English* (as n. 4) and A. K. Siewers, 'The Bluest-Greyest-Greenest Eye: Colours of Martyrdom and Colours of the Winds as Iconographic Landscape', *Cambrian Medieval Celtic Studies*, 50 (2005), 31–66.

29. C. P. Biggam, 'Ualdenege and the Concept of Strange Eyes', in *Lexis and Texts in Early English: Studies Presented to Jane Roberts*, ed. J. Roberts, C. Kay and L. Sylvester (Amsterdam 2001), 34–35.

30. Bruce-Mitford, 'Decoration', in *Evangeliorum Quattuor* (as n. 1), I, 134.

31. *Isidore of Seville's Etymologies: The Complete English Translation of Isidori Hispalensis Episcopi Etymologiarum sive Originum Libri XX*, trans. P. Throop, 2 vols (Charlotte, VT 2005), II, XI.1.31: 'Oculi vocati [...] quia occultum lumen habent, id est, secretum, vel intus positum. Hi inter omnes sensus viciniore animae existunt; in oculis enim omne mentis indicium est, unde et animi perturbatio vel hilaritas in oculis apparet. Oculi autem iidem et lumina. Et dicta lumina quod ex eis lumen manat, vel quod initio sui clausam teneant lucem, aut extrinsecus acceptam visui proponendam refundant'. *PL*, LXXXII, cols 401c–402a.

32. The following summary draws heavily upon M. Miles, 'Vision: The Eye of the Body and the Eye of the Mind in Saint Augustine's "De Trinitate" and "Confessions"', *The Journal of Religion*, 63 (1983), 125–42.

33. *Ibid.*, 130.

34. See, for example, Psalm 12:4: 'Enlighten my eyes [*illumina oculos meos*]' and Psalm 18:9, 'The precepts of the Lord are brilliant [*lucidem*], enlightening the eyes [*illuminans oculos*]'.

35. Psalm 17:29: 'For you illuminate my lamp [*illuminas lucernam*]'; Psalm 145:8: 'The Lord enlightens (*illuminat*) the blind'.

36. *St. Augustin. Homilies on the Gospel of John; Homilies on the First Epistle of John, Soliloquies*, ed. Philip Schaff, A Select Library of the Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church 7 (Whitefish, MO 2010), 15. 'Quia et homo illuminatus dicitur lux; sed vera lux illa est quae illuminat.' *PL*, XXXV, col. 1391.

37. *PL*, XXXV, cols 1379–88.

38. John Gage, *Colour and Culture: Practice and Meaning from Antiquity to Abstraction* (London 1993), 45.
39. See, for example, the famous mosaics at Ravenna (the book held by the figure to the right of Maximian in San Vitale; each of the gospels held by the four evangelist symbols in the mosaics from the archiepiscopal chapel), and also the book held by Christ in the clypeus above the apse at San Apollinare in Classe. In a more tangible manifestation, the gold cover of the Codex Aureus of St Emmeram depicts Christ in Majesty surrounded by four large green gemstones.
40. *Isidore of Seville's Etymologies* (as n. 31), II.XVI.7.1. '[I]nficiens circa se viriditate repercussum aerem': PL, LXXXII, col. 517a. Bede text, cited in n. 19.
41. See the online translation (as n. 19). '[T]enantur, eo amplius haereditatem immarcescibilem et aeternam conservatam in coelis et mente concipere sperando, et in proximos satagunt spargere praedicando': PL, XCIII, cols 198c–d.
42. Brown, *Lindisfarne* (as n. 1), 278, 332.
43. For an explanation as to the relationship between spiritual and physical vision as discussed by Augustine, see Miles, 'Vision' (as n. 32).
44. See the online translation (as n. 19). 'Et gloria Domini in hoc colore consistat, qui portat imaginem supercoelestis': PL, XCIII, col. 198a. Cf. Exodus 24:10: 'And they saw the God of Israel. And under his feet was something like a work of sapphire stone, or like the sky, when it is serene'; Ezekiel 10:1: 'And I saw, and behold, in the firmament that was over the heads of the cherubim, there appeared above them something like the sapphire stone, with the sight of the likeness of a throne'.
45. Well-known examples of the *crux gemmata* include the cross under the arch of the apse of S. Vitale in Ravenna and the great jewelled cross that dominates the apse of S. Apollinare in Classe.
46. See, for example, the mandorla of Christ in Majesty in the Sacramentary of Charles the Bald (Paris, Bibliothèque nationale, MS Latin 1141, fol. 6r); Paris, Bibliothèque nationale, MS Latin 9385, fol. 197v; the New Minster *Liber Vitae* (BL, MS Stowe 944, fol. 6r); the halo of the crucified Christ and those of the four evangelists in the so-called Gospels of François II (Paris, Bibliothèque nationale, MS Latin 257, fol. 12v); and the haloes of the four evangelists in an 11th-century enamel pectoral cross from the State Pushkin Museum.
47. See, for example, Christ's halo in the presbytery and apse mosaics of San Vitale, Ravenna.
48. Gregory the Great, for example, in his commentaries on Ezekiel, explained that Mark as the lion represents Christ waking at his resurrection while John as the eagle symbolizes Christ's ascension into the heavens: PL, LXXVI, cols 815a–d. Brown has argued that Mark and John lack facial hair because they represent the 'youthful, immortal types of the resurrected Christ': Brown, *Lindisfarne* (as n. 1), 350.
49. H. Pulliam, 'Looking to Byzantium: Light, Color, and Cloth in the Book of Kells' Virgin and Child Page', in *Insular and Anglo-Saxon Art and Thought in the Early Medieval Period*, ed. C. Hourihane (University Park, PA 2011), 59–78.
50. For a discussion of possible paste additions to Insular sculpture, see R. N. Bailey, *England's Earliest Sculptors* (Toronto 1996), 5–11. Analyses of the Aberlady fragment were undertaken as a part of the National Museums of Scotland-Glenmorangie Research project: see A. Blackwell, 'Individuals', in A. Blackwell, D. Clarke and M. Goldberg, *Early Medieval Scotland: Individuals, Communities and Ideas* (Edinburgh 2012).
51. Durham, Cathedral Library, MS A. II. 17, fol. 38v, and Dublin, Trinity College, MS A. 4. 5. (57), fols 21v, 84v. Due to the deteriorated state of the Durham crucifixion page, reproductions frequently alter its colour so as to increase the legibility of both the image and the text that surrounds it. As a result the colour is exaggerated in most publications, while in others it severely diminished. My observations are based on a close inspection of the manuscript.
52. See C. Pietrangeli, *San Giovanni in Laterano* (Firenze 1990), 58. I am grateful to my colleague Claudia Bolgia for directing me to this mosaic.
53. Image online at the Pierpont Morgan Library website, <<http://www.themorgan.org/collections/collections.asp?id=67>> (accessed 1 November 2012). See also *The Making of England: Anglo-Saxon Art and Culture AD 600–900*, ed. L. Webster and J. Backhouse (Toronto 1991), 170. Because of the even distribution of orange, it appears that this was the original colour of the enamel, although some red enamels do corrode to yellow and conceivably orange (personal communication with Dr Susanna Kirk, National Museums of Scotland).
54. *Saint Augustin: Expositions on the Book of Psalms*, trans. A. C. Coxe, A Select Library of the Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church 8 (Edinburgh 1996), 10. '[I]n ipso corde, id est, in illo cubili ubi orandum est loquebatur': PL, XXXVI, col. 82.
55. Nordenfalk, *Celtic* (as n. 6), pl. 4.

56. Brown, *Lindisfarne* (as n. 1), 286.
57. *Homilies on the Book of the Prophet Ezekiel: Saint Gregory the Great*, trans. T. Tomkinson (Etna, CA 2008), 355. 'Quia praedicatorum illius mentes internae viriditatis amore solidavit, ut transitoria cuncta despiciant [...] Unde et ipse pastor Ecclesiae, auditores suos ad pascua aeternae viriditatis vocans': *PL*, LXXVI, cols 999b–c.
58. 'Qui radiis percussus solis, ardentem ex se emittit fulgorem. Quia coelestibus semper intentus sanctorum animus, divini luminis quotidie radiis innovatus [...] ardentior aeterna perquiri, aliisque inquirenda suadet': *PL*, XCIII, col. 198a.
59. '[S]maragdo lapidi nimiae viriditatis': *PL*, XCIII, col. 143b.
60. Pliny the Elder, *Natural History: A Selection*, trans. J. F. Healy (London 2004), 372 (from chapter 16 of book 33). Although it has been suggested that Bede was only familiar with the earlier books of Pliny's *Natural History*, his commentary on the Apocalypse draws heavily upon the later books: see P. Kitson, 'Lapidary Traditions in Anglo-Saxon England: Part II, Bede's *Explanatio Apocalypsis* and Related Works', *Anglo-Saxon England*, 12 (1983), 73–123.
61. *PL*, LXXXII, col. 517a.
62. Specifically, treatises 2.16, 34.9, and 35: *PL*, XXXV, cols 1395, 1655 and 1660.
63. Brown, *Lindisfarne* (as n. 1), 369.
64. *Ibid.*, loc. cit.; O'Reilly, 'St John' (as n. 16); J. Hamburger, *St. John the Divine: The Deified Evangelist in Medieval Art and Theology* (Berkeley, CA 2002). See also n. 48 above.
65. H. Pulliam, *Word and Image in the Book of Kells* (Dublin 2006), 180–85.
66. Brown, *Lindisfarne* (as n. 1), 369; Kendrick, *Animating the Letter* (as n. 17), 161–64.
67. H. Pulliam, "'The Eyes of the Handmaid': The Corbie Psalter and the Ruthwell Cross", in *Listen O Isles Unto Me: Studies in Medieval Word and Image in Honour of Jennifer O'Reilly*, ed. E. Mullins and D. Scully (Cork, 2011), 253–62.
68. Pulliam, *Word and Image* (as n. 65), 180–85.
69. Henderson's explanation is complex, drawing upon Psalm 73:11 ('why do you not withdraw your right hand from your bosom'), and the so-called Christ in Majesty page on fol. 32v, suggesting: 'if the first figure on 28v [the Matthew Portrait] and the second on f. 32v are indeed seen in the same setting — one enthroned, surrounded by beasts, the other, certainly Christ, acclaimed by angels — and form a sequence, the almighty enthroned of Chapter 4, and the Lamb, as it had been slain, of Chapter 5, then the gesture of the concealed hand could represent the hidden counsels of God, not yet revealed'. G. Henderson, *From Durrow to Kells: The Insular Gospel-Books, 650–800* (London 1987), 157.
70. M. Carruthers, *The Book of Memory: A Study of Memory in Medieval Culture*, Cambridge Studies in Medieval Literature 10 (Cambridge 1990), 53–57.
71. *PL*, XXXV, cols 1379–88.
72. Miles, *Vision* (as n. 32), 135.
73. For an overview of this association between John and love, see Brown, *Lindisfarne* (as n. 1), 369.
74. See, for example, Bruce Mitford's description in *Evangeliorum Quattuor* (as n. 1), I, 128.
75. G. R. Owen-Crocker, *Dress in Anglo-Saxon England* (Manchester 1986), 302.
76. Gage, *Colour* (as n. 38), 26.
77. For an explanation as to this deviation, see Pulliam, 'Color' (as n. 3), 7–10.
78. This may simply be a case of simultaneous contrast, or equally it could be an example of chromostereopsis.